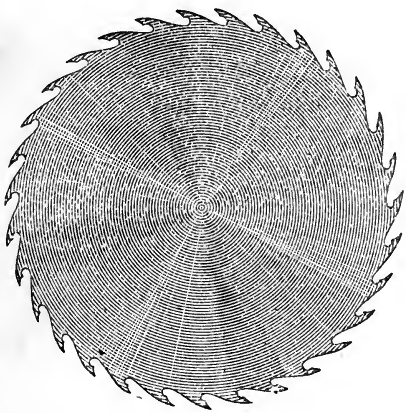
Lumber (pseud.)
Manchester Ship Canal,
Manchester a timber port

Manchester Ship Canal.

MANCHESTER
A
TIMBER PORT.

BY

LUMBER.



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MANCHESTER A TIMBER PORT.

"What though few proud historic annals trace
Monarch or nobles from this busy place,
*   *   *   *
Full many a modern merit she displays,
And bright as the 'Morn o' May' now rise her days."

It is perhaps not overstating the fact to assert that at the present moment some two millions or more of people centred in Manchester and the surrounding towns are interesting themselves in a scheme which they believe will vitally affect their future welfare.

This project—the Manchester Ship Canal Scheme—has already progressed no inconsiderable way towards maturity.

It has for several months commanded the almost undivided attention of a number of earnest and influential workers.

An intelligible and much approved plan of construction has been decided upon; the necessary capital required for the obtainance of the consent of Parliament is being fast subscribed; and a scheme, which no great length of time ago was regarded as being visionary, is now fairly established, and has attached to it every prospect of early realization.

Towards the furtherance of the project much has been done already, but much more remains yet to be accomplished.

Amongst other matters, the effects which the working of the Canal is certain to bring upon particular branches of trade are likely to be such as to render it absolutely imperative that estimates of the effects likely to occur shall be made by those qnalified in each instance to form judgment.

It may be taken as an indisputable fact that few trades will

be influenced more by the Ship Canal than will the Foreign Timber Trade.

On this point we have the clear and disinterested evidence of an influential and widely circulated trade paper, *The Timber Trades Journal.*

Concluding a recent leading article upon the Canal scheme, it says :—

"This, however, we may say, that if the Manchester Ship Canal dues are not too heavy, there is no branch of trade that will contribute towards them more certainly than the timber shipping; for, as explained above, the bulkiness of the goods, in proportion to value, renders it most important to the merchant to get at the nearest possible port to its final market, without the necessity of re-handling and going to the expense of further labour and land-carriage upon it."

Again, the same Journal concludes a leading article by remarking that—

"A vast increase will take place in the building trade of Manchester, and all its outlying dependencies; for, as we have already pointed out, nothing will be cheapened by it for that part of the country more than imported timber."

And, adds the same Journal—

"For the advantage of the general public, as a great and useful undertaking, we must all wish to see it carried to a successful issue."

The responsibility of proving that, by means of the Ship Canal, Manchester may be converted into a timber port is in no wise an onerous task.

It was the surprise frequently expressed at so little importance being evidently attached to this possibility, that primarily induced me to undertake the compilation of this pamphlet.

The work has been mainly undertaken with a two-fold object :—Firstly, for the purpose of showing to what extent the Foreign Timber Trade may be expected to benefit the Canal with traffic. Secondly, for the purpose of inquiring as to the advantages the Canal will afford wood-consumers in Lancashire or elsewhere.

It is necessary that I should in the first instance supply some information as to the importance of the Foreign Timber trade carried on in this country.

There are in the United Kingdom 118 ports into which

Foreign Timber is imported, and that into these places there were last year collectively imported 5,535,146 tons (or loads) of foreign wood.

Although exceeding five and a half million tons, the wood import last year was an unusually light one.

The following table will show from whence this wood was received:—

	Tons (or loads).
Norway and Sweden	2,022,472
British North America	1,292,663
Russia	1,160,050
Germany	224,205
Other Countries	835,756
Total	5,535,146 tons.

Of this great importation London alone received 1,404,793 tons.

The remainder of the import was spread over the 118 ports. There are, however, only eight of the ports which the Canal will materially affect, and to which it will be necessary here to refer.

These eight ports, as will be seen by a reference to the following table, collectively received last year 1,761,547 tons.

It is necessary, for the purpose of our arguments, to separate these eight ports into two divisions—those which are situated on the West Coast, and those which lie on the East Coast.

The West Coast Ports are:—

			Loads.
Liverpool (which last year received)			524,404
Barrow-in-Furness	„	„	51,487
Fleetwood	„	„	18,116
Total loads			594,007

The East Coast Ports are:—

			Loads.
Hull (which last year received)			364,831
West Hartlepool	„	„	259,942
Grimsby	„	„	216,942
Newcastle-on-Tyne	„	„	175,413
Sunderland	„	„	150,412
Total loads			1,167,540

By these figures it will be seen that about double the quantity of wood was last year imported into the East Coast, of that which was imported into the West Coast ports.

It is a fact sufficiently well known, even by those not engaged in the timber trade, that Swedish and Russian woods are mostly brought into the East Coast ports, and that American or Canadian woods are mostly brought into the West Coast ports.

In any case, wood can be imported from the Baltic into the East Coast ports, and from British North America into the West Coast ports, with such distinct advantage in either case that neither coasts are likely to lose their characteristics as far as their wood imports are concerned.

Manchester as a timber port will acquire all the characteristics which Liverpool now possesses, so far as her wood imports are concerned; as she will import mainly Canadian woods, she will differ only in her plan of distributing her wood imports, insomuch as she will have an increased area of distribution.

It is therefore hardly worth while considering the extra costs of importing Baltic wood into Liverpool, or North American wood into any of the East Coast ports.

What is of infinitely more importance for present inquiry, is to refer to what has been termed "Fashions in respect to Woods," *i.e.*, so far as these fashions affect the wood-consuming districts mainly under discussion, viz., Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Now in the West Riding of Yorkshire and Lancashire—the fashions in respect to woods appear to be very firmly established.

We are making reference mainly to building-woods, which represent the bulk consumed.

It is the fashion to use Baltic wood in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and North American wood in Lancashire.

These fashions had their foundation based on economic causes.

Baltic woods became the fashion in the West Riding because the East Coast ports, into which, as we have seen, they can be the most cheaply imported, were the most accessible, and North American woods have been, to the present, mostly used in Lancashire for precisely the same reason.

But in no other business is the severity of modern competition more keenly felt than in the building trade, and the cheap and abundant building woods of North America are certain to win their markets in the West Riding or elsewhere wherever cheap carriage rates favour their introduction, or even renders their introduction anything like possible and the

Ship Canal will so lessen the carriage rate to the West Riding *towns* that North American woods will certainly enter into more general use in that district.

It is certain in the West Riding of Yorkshire and Lancashire there are consumed annually considerably over a million tons of foreign wood. The importance, then, of the trade to be competed for is therefore at once indicated.

I estimate the cost of conveying the wood which is annually consumed in the West Riding and Lancashire, from the ports to the districts where it is consumed, at from £600,000 to £700,000. The traffic, therefore, must alone be of very weighty importance to the carrying Companies concerned.

Doubtless when Manchester becomes converted into a wood depôt, it will distribute a large amount of timber in the Midlands—the Potteries and possibly in some other districts.

The bulk of the supplies which will be sent out from Manchester will, however, be distributed in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire.

An immense amount of foreign wood *is annually consumed in Manchester.*

No other town in the United Kingdom—London excepted—can lay claim to having a like consumption.

There are the ordinary requirements of a large industrial city, plus the consumption of an important packing-case making industry.

To the wood consumers and merchants of Manchester, therefore, the Canal scheme is a subject of the greatest importance.

Yet great as this importance unquestionably is, it must be deemed insignificant when compared alongside the new and immense business Manchester will acquire when the city is benefited by the acquired facilities which will establish it as *a Port for the Distribution of Wood,* and when it largely supplies, as it will, Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire with timber.

The extent of the future development of Manchester as a wood port, hinges of course chiefly upon the saving of carriage which the Ship Canal will effect.

I say *chiefly* upon this—but should add, not altogether.

If by bringing timber to Manchester it could be distributed in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire at only the *same cost* as though from Liverpool, I am inclined to think

WEST COAST PORTS.

	Population.	Manchester. Distance. Miles.	Manchester. Rate per Ton. s. d.	Manchester. Per Mile. d.	Liverpool. Last Year's Import, 524,404 Loads. Distance. Miles.	Liverpool. Rate per Ton. s. d.	Liverpool. Per Mile. d.	Barrow-in-Furness. Last Year's Import, 51,487 Loads. Distance. Miles.	Barrow-in-Furness. Rate per Ton. s. d.	Barrow-in-Furness. Per Mile. d.	Fleetwood. Last Year's Import, 18,116 Loads. Distance. Miles.	Fleetwood. Rate per Ton. s. d.	Fleetwood. Per Mile. d.
Manchester and Salford	850,000	...	...	...	31½	9 9	3·715	79½	10 10	1·636	59½	7 11	1·597
Sale	7,916	5¾	3 0	6·858	31	9 4	3·613	93	10 10	1·398	...	...	...
Stockport	59,544	5¾	3 0	6·261	35½	9 9	3·296	95	11 3	1·422	56	7 11	1·697
Ashton-under-Lyne	43,389	6½	3 0	5·539	38	10 7	3·343	94	10 10	1·383	57	8 9	1·843
Hyde	28,629	7	3 4	5·715	37½	9 7	3·06	97	10 10	1·34	58	11 8	2·414
Staleybridge	39,671	...	...	...	39½	10 7	3·216	96	10 10	1·355	58	8 9	1·811
Oldham	152,511	8¼	3 4	4·84	53½	11 5	2·56	93	11 3	1·452	58	9 7	1·983
Altrincham	11,249	8¼	3 4	4·84	29½	9 4	3·797	96	11 3	1·407	59	9 2	1·865
Heywood	21,134	9¾	4 0	4·924	40	11 5	3·425	86	11 8	1·628	49	9 7	2·347
Bury	51,582	10	3 4	4·	34½	11 0	3·827	82	10 5	1·525	46	9 2	2·392
Bolton	105,973	...	...	...	28½	8 4	3·51	76	10 5	1.645	40	8 4	2·5
Rochdale	68,865	10¾	4 0	4·466	36	12 4	4·1	89	13 4	1·798	53	10 6	2·378
Marple	4,421	11¾	4 2	4·256	41	11 3	3·293	99	12 6	1·51	59	11 3	2·289
Glossop	19,574	...	...	...	...	...	...	102	15 0	1·776	...	...	...
Rawtenstall	12,571	...	...	...	...	...	...	83	12 6	1·808	47	10 0	2·554
Hayfield	36,286	18¼	5 0	3·288	...	...	...	105	13 4	1·524	66	...	...
Todmorden	23,681	19	5 10	3·685	47	13 6	3·447	87	14 2	1·955	62	11 8	2·259
Wigan	48,196	...	...	...	19	5 10	3·685	71	9 2	1·55	36	6 0	2·
Bacup	25,033	...	...	...	48	10 10	2·709	87	12 6	1·725	51	10 10	2·55
Chorley, Lanc.	19,472	22¼	6 3	3·371	27	9 4	4·149	65	10 0	1·847	28	6 8	2·858
Accrington	31,435	22½	6 8	3·5	40½	12 8	3·754	72	13 6	2·25	36	9 2	3·05
Over Darwen	33,537	23	6 0	3·131	...	...	...	71	11 8	1·972	34	8 4	2·942
Hebden Bridge	5,008	...	...	...	...	...	...	91	12 6	1·649	35	10 0	3·429
Blackburn	104,012	24	6 8	3·3	35	11 0	3·77	67	10 10	1·95	31	7 6	2·904
Farnworth	20,701	24	7 6	3·75	12	8 4	8·3	85	10 0	1·412	42	8 4	2·381
Huddersfield	87,146	26	7 6	3·462	57½	11 0	2·296	101	11 3	1·337	70	9 2	1·528
Gt. Harwood	6,281	...	...	...	...	...	...	92	12 6	1·64	39	9 2	2·821
Burnley	63,502	28¼	7 6	3·186	44	13 6	3·682	79	14 2	2·16	52	10 10	2·5
Sowerby Bdge.	8,721	...	...	...	...	...	...	96	12 6	1·563	66	10 0	1·825
Padiham	8,983	...	...	...	...	...	...	76	12 6	1·974	41	10 10	3·171
Northwich	12,246	29¾	6 8	2·69	42½	6 0	1·695	98	11 8	1·429	61	10 10	2·132
Crewe	24,372	31	8 4	3·226	43½	9 7	2·644	107	11 8	1·309	73	14 2	2·329
Halifax	73,633	32¼	8 4	3·101	62	11 10	2·29	96	11 8	1·459	64	10 0	1·875
Bakewell	2,502	33	6 8	2·42	...	...	...	123	10 10	1·057	...	...	...
Dewsbury	69,531	33½	8 4	2·986	65	12 8	2·339	98	12 6	1·54	72	10 10	1·806
Colne	11,970	...	...	...	...	...	...	76	10 0	1·579	58	11 8	2·414
Batley	27,514	35	8 4	2·857	...	...	...	95	12 6	1·579	...	10 10	...
Nantwich	7,488	35¼	8 4	2·837	45	8 4	2·2	112	12 6	1·339	76	14 2	2·237
Barnsley	29,789	35¾	8 4	2·809	66½	11 10	2·136	114	10 0	1·053	85	10 0	1·412
Stoke-on-Trnt.	152,457	...	...	...	58½	10 5	2·136	122	13 4	1·312	87	10 0	1·38
Chester	40,342	39½	8 4	2·532	17	5 10	4·118	101	10 0	1·189	65	10 0	1·847
Bradford	183,032	40½	8 4	2·44	69½	12 8	2·188	84	10 0	1·429	77	10 0	1·559
Sheffield	284,410	41¾	8 4	2·396	72	12 8	2·109	130	10 10	1·	91	10 10	1·428
Leeds	309,126	42½	9 4	2·636	74	12 8	2·042	91	10 0	1·319	81	10 0	1·482
Wakefield	30,573	...	...	...	70	10 0	1·715	102	10 0	1·177	78	10 0	1·539
Wrexham	10,928	52	9 2	2·116	...	...	...	113	12 6	1·328	...	...	...
Flint	5,176	52¼	9 2	2·106	27½	7 6	3·272	114	12 6	1·316	77	11 8	1·81
Stafford	19,901	55¾	10 0	2·153	68	13 6	2·383	132	14 2	1·288	96	13 4	1·6
Chesterfield	12,221	56	10 0	2·143	84	12 8	1·81	141	11 8	·099	107	12 6	1·402
Holywell	3,091	56¾	10 0	2·115	33½	8 4	2·986	118	10 10	1·102	94	10 10	1·383
Derby	80,410	60½	10 0	1·984	81½	14 4	2·12	147	13 4	1·089	108	13 4	1·482
Burton-on-Trent	39,285	63¼	10 10	2·056	88½	12 6	1·695	151	13 4	1·06	...	...	...
Nottingham	111,631	74	10 0	1·622	100½	14 4	1·712	158	13 4	1·013	120	15 10	1·583
Birmingham	400,757	84	14 2	2·024	90	14 4	1·91	161	15 0	1·118	126	12 6	1·191
Lincoln	37,312	84½	11 8	1·657	116	13 4	1·38	158	15 0	1·14	134	15 0	1·344
Leicester	122,351	89	12 6	1·686	118	14 4	1·46	187	15 0	·097	137	15 10	1·387
Newark	14,019	92	11 8	1·522	...	...	...	158	15 0	1·14	113	13 4	1·416
Grantham	17,345	98	15 0	1·837	...	...	...	172	15 0	1·047	148	15 0	1·217
Northampton	57,553	133	18 4	1·655	142½	15 0	1·264	202	17 6	1·04	...	...	...

N.B.—Since the compilation of this Table some of

…TES FROM

EAST COAST PORTS.

Hull. Last Year's Import, 364,831 Loads.			W. Hartlepool. Last Year's Import, 259,942 Loads.			Grimsby. Last Year's Import, 216,942 Loads.			Newcastle-on-Tyne. Last Year's Import, 175,413 Loads.			Sunderland. Last Year's Import, 150,412 Loads.		
Distance. Miles.	Rate per Ton.	Per Mile.	Distance. Miles.	Rate per Ton.	Per Mile.	Distance. Miles.	Rate per Ton.	Per Mile.	Distance. Miles.	Rate per Ton.	Per Mile.	Distance. Miles.	Rate per Ton.	Per Mile.
	s. d.	d.		s. d.	d.		s. d.	d.		s. d.	d.		s. d.	d.
89	12 6	1·686	114	13 4	1·404	109	13 4	1·468	143	14 2	1·189	143	13 4	1·119
96	13 4	1·6	118	13 4	1·356	116	13 4	1·38	147	13 4	1·089	147	13 4	1·089
91	15 0	1·979	114	13 4	1·404	110	13 4	1·455	140	14 2	1·215	131½	13 4	1·217
84	15 0	2·143	109	13 4	1·46	103	13 4	1·554	144	14 2	1·181	126½	13 4	1·266
87	15 0	2·069	112	15 0	1·608	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
83	15 0	2·169	107	13 4	1·496	105	13 4	1·524	135	14 2	1·259	126½	15 0	1·423
82	13 4	1·952	107	13 4	1·496	110	13 4	1·445	135	13 4	1·185	135½	13 8	1·297
98	13 4	1·633	122	13 4	1·312	118	13 4	1·357	151	13 4	1·06	151	13 4	1·06
91	13 4	1·759	114	13 4	1·404	119	13 4	1·345	143	14 7	1·224	143	14 7	1·224
95	13 4	1·685	118	13 4	1·356	121	13 4	1·323	147	14 7	1·191	147	14 7	1·191
101	13 4	1·585	122	13 4	1·312	120	13 4	1·3	...	...	...	...	...	...
88	12 6	1·705	113	12 6	1·328	118	12 6	1·272	128	13 9	1·29	128	13 9	1.29
89	13 4	1·798	115	15 0	1·566	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	112	14 2	1·518	...	...	...	143	14 2	1·189	143	14 2	1·189
100	14 2	1·7	126	14 2	1·35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
96	14 2	1·771	128	15 0	1·407	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
78	12 6	1·924	103	12 6	1·457	120	12 6	1·25	134	13 9	1·232	134	13 9	1·232
109	15 0	1·377	132	15 0	1·363	125	15 0	1·44	...	...	...	...	...	...
86	14 2	1·771	130	14 2	1·309	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
108	15 0	1·39	138	15 0	1·304	130	15 0	1·385	171	15 10	1·1	171	15 10	1·1
93	13 4	1·721	120	13 4	1·3	130	13 4	1·231	152	14 7	1·152	132	14 7	1·326
103	14 2	1·651	124	14 2	1·371	130	14 2	1·309	125	15 5	1·179	157	15 0	1·147
75	10 6	1·68	97	10 6	1·3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
99	13 4	1·61	122	13 4	1·312	140	13 4	1·143	154	15 5	1·202	137½	15 0	1·347
...	...	...	123	10 0	·976	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65	9 2	1·693	83	9 2	1·326	96	9 2	1·146	115½	9 2	·953	108	9 2	1·019
95	13 4	1·685	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
89	12 6	1·416	102	12 6	1·471	130	12 6	1·155	146	13 9	1·131	...	...	...
70	10 0	1·715	92	10 0	1·305	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
93	13 4	1·721	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
111	13 4	1·442	132	15 0	1·363	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
116	13 4	1·38	143	13 4	1·119	140	13 4	1·143	167	15 0	1·078	160	15 0	1·126
68	10 0	1·765	88	10 0	1.363	105	10 0	1·143	121	10 0	·992	105	10 0	1·143
97	13 4	1·65	142	13 4	1·127	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
58	9 2	1·897	81	9 2	1·359	70	9 2	1·572	118	10 0	1·018	97	10 0	1·238
89	11 8	1·574	107	12 6	1·402	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
59	9 2	1·865	...	...	...	70	9 2	1·572	...	...	...	...	...	...
121	15 0	1·488	146	15 0	1·233	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
61	9 2	1·804	85	9 2	1·295	66	9 2	1·6	120½	10 0	·996	109½	10 0	1·096
120	13 4	1·3	148	15 0	1·217	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
126	15 0	1·429	148	15 10	1·284	130	15 0	1·385	176	...	...	...	...	..
61	9 2	1·804	81	9 2	1·359	80	9 2	1·375	109½	9 2	1·005	96½	9 2	1·14
58	9 2	1·897	105	10 0	1·143	69½	9 2	1·583	137	10 10	·949	123	10 10	1·057
51	7 11	1·863	72	7 11	1·32	75	7 11	1·26	98½	7 11	·964	90½	7 11	1·05
51	7 11	1·863	73	8 4	1·37	65	7 11	1·462	...	...	...	...	...	...
138	15 0	1·304	160	17 6	1·313	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
138	16 8	1·45	160	16 8	1·25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
126	13 4	1·27	165	15 0	1·091	116	13 4	1·38	191	15 0	·943	191	15 0	·943
69	9 2	1·595	116	10 0	1·035	70	9 2	1·572	153	10 10	·85	135	10 10	·963
143	18 4	1·539	164	18 4	1·342	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
92	10 0	1·305	155	10 10	·839	90	10 0	1·3	171	12 6	·872	156	10 10	·83
104	10 0	1·151	170	10 10	·765	100	10 0	1·2	...	...	...	...	...	...
98	8 0	1·021	153	9 2	·719	78	8 0	1·233	187	9 7	·615	158	10 0	·754
135	14 2	1·28	194	14 2	·877	131	14 2	1·3	213½	15 0	·844	201	15 0	·896
52	6 8	1·539	89	10 0	1·349	45	6 8	1·7	...	...	...	...	...	...
116	10 0	1·035	162	11 2	·828	98	10 0	1·225	194	11 2	·691	181½	11 2	·711
76	7 6	1·185	120	8 8	·86	60	7 6	1·5	152	8 8	·685	141½	8 8	·735
76	9 0	1·422	134	10 0	·896	69	11 8	2·029	166½	11 8	·841	156½	11 8	·895
143	15 0	1·259	194	15 0	·928	131	14 2	1·3	...	...	...	...	...	...

…the rates to Manchester have been slightly reduced.

that Manchester would still develop into a wood port, but that the development would be of slow process, and that Liverpool, having a great established connection, would retain its present position as the leading port in England for the distribution of North American woods.

Vulgarly speaking, Manchester would be "a thorn in its side," but Liverpool would continue to exist as a great wood emporium, notwithstanding the competition offered by Manchester being in such close proximity to its customers.

But it is idle to discuss such a contingency.

If Manchester acquires its Ship Canal, it is estimated by the well-informed—that an *additional cost of 2s. 6d. per ton will be abundantly sufficient to discharge the wood on to Manchester quays, above that which would discharge it on to Liverpool quays.*

There exists, let it here be said, no other trade more dependent upon carriage rates than the timber trade.

In respect to North American woods—and it will, as we have pointed out, be mainly North American woods which will be imported into Manchester— the market competition is very great, and the smallest saving in price is usually sufficient to regulate the course of business.

It is greatly for this reason that the Ship Canal will have such a certain effect in developing a timber trade at Manchester.

Of all ports it may be said—but it may be remarked of wood ports in particular—that their importance is in exact relation to their geographical position or artificially attained facilities.

It is necessary, then, to contrast the geographical position of Manchester with its Ship Canal, against that of Liverpool, as that port will then stand. And what are the relative conditions which we see existent?

We find Liverpool situated almost on the coast line, and with nearly all its customers before it inland, the nearest of importance being 30 miles away, and the West Riding of Yorkshire all but shut out by the great distance which intervenes between it and them, or rather by the heavy timber rates which rule from Liverpool.

Manchester, on the contrary—a huge colony in itself—is surrounded by towns teeming with an industrial population which regards Manchester as its market.

The population and distances of these towns from Manchester can be gathered from the table furnished with this pamphlet

and to judge of the importance of the case it is only necessary to refer to such towns as Stockport, Hyde, Ashton-under-Lyne, Staleybridge, Bury, Heywood, Rochdale, Oldham, Bolton, &c., and to mark that the land which separates these hives of industry is thickly studded over with populous and industrial villages. It has been said that within a five mile radius of the Manchester Exchange there is a population of 850,000 people, and within a 20 mile radius a population greater than any other in the country living in a corresponding area.

For all practical purposes, indeed, that part of Lancashire contiguous to Manchester is one huge industrial town; as it is assuredly the greatest wood-consuming district in the world.

And then, referring to the West Riding of Yorkshire, we see that with Manchester reached, half the distance that separates the West Riding from Liverpool is bridged over, and so for the greater part of the timber trade of that district. Manchester, having its Canal, would offer a severity of competition against which it would tax the utmost resources of the East Coast Ports to profitably compete. For a great portion of the timber trade of the Lancashire towns no other port, east or west, could advantageously compete.

Manchester, with its Ship Canal, will possess an unique position as a timber port, because it is situated in the centre of one of the two greatest wood-consuming districts in the world, and nearer by a number of miles to the other, the West Riding, than is any other port in the kingdom.

Although it is desirable to speculate as little as possible upon the futurity of the timber trade at Liverpool, as affected by the Canal, it is quite impossible, when forming an estimate of the new trade to be acquired by Manchester, to leave the position of Liverpool altogether undiscussed.

The wood imports into Liverpool during the last three years, have been as follows:

	Loads.
1880	397,416
1881	524,404
1882	640,360

These figures show an average import of 520,726 loads.

It is seen that Liverpool—with facilities for distribution,

which, as contrasted with those which Manchester will possess, are certainly to be regarded as limited—receives an average import of 521,000 loads.

What Liverpool has done with imperfect facilities, Manchester can surely accomplish with increased means to aid it.

It is indeed impossible to understand how any one having a knowledge of the circumstances could arrive at a different conclusion.

It appears to be an almost certain eventuality that *much of the existing Liverpool timber business will, on the completion of the Canal, be removed to Manchester*; for it is hardly reasonable to suppose that, by confining their trade to Liverpool, importers would care to face the severity of competition, which Manchester importers would necessarily present to them.

The experiment might be tried, but it could only conclude with one certain result, a result disastrous to the Liverpool importers. Nor is it likely that this result would be long in declaring itself.

It may be urged as an argument, that upon the completion of the Canal, the railway and other carrying companies will lower their rates, so as to place Liverpool upon an equal footing with Manchester, just as the North-Eastern Railway Company has equalized many of the rates from the North-East Coast ports.

This may be the case, and if so, the consumers of wood in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire will sufficiently benefit by the competition which the Canal will evoke, and the scheme is, consequently, worthy of support.

But that any great reduction will be made is hardly likely, for the local Railway Companies will, after all, benefit largely by Manchester being converted into a Timber Port, as it will be the means of diverting a large amount of newly-acquired traffic, which now passes over the North-Eastern Railway Company's lines, on to their lines—traffic which does not now exist from Liverpool.

The North-Eastern is as much a Dock as a Railway Company, and the low timber rates, which so greatly benefit West Hartlepool, Sunderland, and Newcastle-on-Tyne, were granted for the purpose of diverting wood imports from Hull to the more northern ports, where the North-Eastern Company own the Docks as well as the Railways.

As is well enough known, the North-Eastern have a traffic monopoly at Hull; but in the north they have a traffic and dock monopoly, and hence the low rates from the Northern ports.

Thus there does not exist the same reason for the Railway Companies which run into Manchester to equalize the rates from Liverpool and Manchester, as has been done by the North-Eastern Railway Company at their ports.

It has been pointed out, and a reference to the table of rates herewith furnished will confirm the statement, that the cost of conveying timber from Liverpool to Manchester, including cartage to trucks at Liverpool, is 9s. 9d. per ton; so that consumers of wood at Manchester will benefit by the Ship Canal to the extent of at least 7s. 3d. per ton, or, in other words, they will save almost three-fourths of the existing carriage charge which they now pay.

The present timber rates from Manchester to the Lancashire towns appear to be lower than the rates from Liverpool by about 6s. per ton in a number of cases; but in many cases the Manchester rates show a much greater saving.

Thus, for instance, the timber rate from Manchester to Oldham is only 3s. 4d. per ton, whilst the rate from Liverpool is 11s. 5d. per ton; and an almost similar saving is effected so far as Ashton, Staleybridge, Heywood, Bury, Todmorden, and a number of other Lancastrian towns are concerned.

In respect to Rochdale, a saving to the extent of 8s. 4d. per ton is effected, the existing timber rate from Manchester being 4s. per ton, as against 12s. 4d. per ton, the rate from Liverpool.

The present difference in rates to many of the West Riding towns displays a saving of from 4s. to 5s. in favour of Manchester.

The heavy timber rates at present existing from Liverpool to Manchester contrast remarkably with those from some of the North-Eastern Railway Company's wood ports.

For instance, the rate for timber from Sunderland or Newcastle to Manchester, a distance of some 140 miles, including loading-up charges, is only 13s. 4d. per ton; whilst the rate from Liverpool to Manchester, a distance only of 31 miles, is 9s. 9d. per ton.

Thus we can see that from Sunderland and Newcastle, the North-Eastern Company can afford to carry timber at a mere fraction over 1d. per mile, the exact charge being 1·143d.

per mile, a circumstance which contrasts very strangely with the existing timber rate between Liverpool and Manchester, for this is at the rate of 3·072d. per mile.

All the North-East Coast ports—Hull, Hartlepool, Grimsby, Newcastle, and Sunderland—are benefited by having almost equal rates to the Lancashire and West Riding towns; and, as will be seen by a reference to the table of rates and distances furnished with this pamphlet, they are exceedingly low rates as compared with the Liverpool rates. Insomuch as the table of rates and distances herewith furnished is an exceedingly exhaustive one, it would be most tedious to make abundant reference to it; but an examination of the table will display some rather startling results, as it will certainly display the excessiveness of the timber rates from Liverpool.

In consequence of the low rates, at the East Coast ports they are not only able to secure the bulk of the timber trade in the West Riding of Yorkshire and the Midlands, but they are enabled to send wood to Manchester, and even to compete seriously with Liverpool for a considerable part of the trade of Lancashire.

I may here remark that—

Whilst I have not reckoned it part of my present task to discuss the question of navigation, it is only right that I should direct attention to an important alteration which is now taking place in respect to the timber traffic of the seas, because it is one directly affecting the Ship Canal.

Until quite recently, sailing vessels were alone employed for the carrying of timber.

A sudden and most remarkable alteration has lately, and particularly this year, occurred, for steamers are now fast ousting out sailing ships; merchants are improving their quay space so as to admit of the rapid discharge of steamers—a necessary condition where steamers are employed; and at the East Coast ports two-thirds of the wood imported this year has been received by steamers, and there is every prospect that no new sailing ships will be built for the trade.

This alteration has not occurred to such a marked extent at Liverpool and the other West Coast ports, although steamers are now being largely introduced into the North American Wood Trade; and no doubt sailing vessels will live longer on the Atlantic than the Baltic.

It may indeed be some years before sailing vessels finally dis-

appear as wood-carriers, but it is a matter only of time, and the use of steamers will be continually on the increase. Steamers are to be chartered at cheaper rates; and, as their cargoes are better protected, and consequently reach this side in superior condition, and, of course, with more certain despatch, the use of steamers is not only possible but advisable.

The fact alone that their employment is possible is most important; for the somewhat expensive necessity of towage which sailing vessels necessitate is thereby avoided, and the fact puts an end to many questions as to difficulties of navigation.

* * * * * *

Taking a final and general survey of the ground over which this pamphlet has travelled, and employing care to avoid exaggeration, I am able only to confirm the impression first formed, that Manchester, by its Ship Canal, will be converted into a timber depôt of the first order of importance.

Its geographical position is as unique as it will, by the Ship Canal, be made advantageous.

Its influence upon the East and West Coast timber ports, and particularly upon the Lancashire and West Riding wood markets will, in all probability, be most considerable.

Manchester will suddenly attach to itself a trade which will represent at least an additional turn over of a million and a half sterling annually.

The newly acquired business will furnish continuous employment for thousands of men; and, whilst adding to its store of wealth, it cannot do otherwise than supply a considerable measure of that energy which, directed through *the Ship Canal, will assuredly impel Manchester to occupy a front position, as a* TIMBER PORT, *amongst the maritime cities of the United Kingdom.*

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